

FORUM

Permanent Forum of Civil Society
Forum Permanent de la Société Civile
Ständiges Forum der Zivilgesellschaft



OFFICIAL STATEMENT No. 2008- 03 OF 15 OCTOBER 2008

SUMMARY

Summary of the Memorandum to European Institutions Programme for the period 2009-2014 “Exploring new approaches”

and of the Memorandum to the Governments of the Trio Spain, Belgium, Hungary 2010-2011

Les hommes placés dans une situation de fait nouvelle, ou dans un système d'obligations différent, adaptent leur comportement et deviennent autres. Ils deviennent meilleurs si le contexte nouveau est meilleur ; c'est l'histoire toute simple du progrès des civilisations. (...). Des transformations psychologiques considérables, que certains cherchent à travers des révolutions violentes, peuvent intervenir pacifiquement si l'on oriente l'esprit des hommes vers le point où leurs intérêts convergent. Ce point existe toujours, il suffit de se fatiguer pour le trouver.
Jean Monnet

The Forum invites the three governments, which will set a new work programme for the period 2010-2011, and European political parties which are preparing the campaign of 2009, to mark the history of the European Union by opening a new page in the EU relations with its citizens and the international community.

Indeed, the Lamassoure report entitled "Citizens and the application of Community law", states that " a Europe of citizens is overdue and requires a radical new approach". **FOR CIVIL SOCIETY TO COOPERATE WITH THE EU AS WELL AS TO ACCELERATE THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A "NEW ECONOMY" AND "A NEW EUROPEAN DREAM", CURRENT SYSTEMS OF GOVERNANCE ARE INADEQUATE TO "RELAUNCH THE INNOVATIVE CAPACITY OF THE UNION".** Thus, the situation inside the EU and the international situation require us to think differently, to explore new approaches, if we are to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The proposed themes are based on an analysis of the ill-managed European constitutional process (Treaty of Lisbon), the achievements of the European Council, the European Parliament and the Barroso Commission. They are also based on an analysis of the impact of regional reality in the EU, evolution in human rights, "financialization" of the economy which makes globalization enter into a new phase, and finally from the increasing risks associated with the scarcity of natural resources and the level of energy costs.

Current financial events are only one earthquakes heralding a necessary and profound reorganization of our societies. We will have to manage throughout the 2009-2014 parliamentary period, not only one crisis but three crises, what some call the "**Triple Big Crunch**", i.e.:

- ✚ The financial system crisis.
- ✚ The impact of climate change and damage to biodiversity
- ✚ The scarcity and security agenda (energy, water, raw material, food).

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The Forum's proposals are based on discussions within the internal Group-projects which it has established on different themes such as citizenship, democracy and peace in the world. As for the "Triple Big Crunch" see our proposals No. 9 and 12.

1. LISBON TREATY. For the final adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon in the current context, the Forum continues to believe that a wide consultation of all citizens at the same time as the European Parliament elections remains a path that must be explored.

2. EUROPEAN ELECTIONS. In anticipation of the Treaty of Lisbon which specifies that the election of the President of the Commission shall take into account the results of the Parliamentary election, the Forum requires each European political party to submit, either alone or in coalition, the candidature of a ticket "President of the Commission and Vice-President for External Affairs", which should respect gender parity.

3. CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS. The "Charter of Fundamental Rights" should be regarded as a pillar of social justice in Europe and the Commission must propose an Union programme of action for programmatic associated rights (for instance, under the Right to Housing, institute associated rights to citizens and communities for assistance in "equipping their building" and make them more energy efficient). The Commission and European Parliament should adopt a multi-year plan of action to contribute to the implementation of the Charter, chapter by chapter. In 2012 the EU should hold a summit of civil societies from signatory Member States to help make the Charter implemented, enrich it and ensure compliance with its terms.

4. COMMON GOODS AND COLLECTIVE RIGHTS. After considering the question of *individual* rights (the Charter of Fundamental Rights), it seems necessary, at the Forum, to equip the EU to enable it to meet new global challenges and contribute to the protection of Common Goods and Collective Rights, a "mutation of Humanity", a better management of its "interdependence", a universal right to "welfare for all".

5. EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP. An action plan "EU citizenship" should be presented by the Commission. It would include initiatives on the rights and duties of citizens, issues relating to residence in the EU and to individual citizens (such as those proposed in the Lamassoure Report) and others.

6. AGORA. The European Parliament should convene a session of a CITIZENS' AGORA devoted to the European Union budget. This would be the appropriate place for debating over the relationship between European citizens, political priorities and the funding of the Union budget.

7. PUBLIC SURVEYS. Regarding the "structural funds", local/regional surveys in advance of the projects and budgets submitted to the Commission should be made mandatory.

8. INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE. "Capitalism must be civilized". One must expand the *Cologne Dialogue* on macroeconomic prospects to the network of banks with funds for socially responsible investments and to representatives of the social economy (The Cologne Dialogue brings currently together the social partners, the European Central Bank and the ECOFIN Council).

9. SECURITY OF THE BANKING SYSTEM. It is urgent that the EU, or at least, the Euro zone of the Union, establish common rules for the banking system, which are based on harmonizing the regulations currently applied within Member States.

10. PEACE. We call for a debate, during the election campaign, on the interrelationships between dossiers which are in fact linked (the Partnership with Russia, the new role of NATO, the Taliban Al Qaeda-Pakistan-Afghanistan, Israel-Palestine, Iran, the Caucasus, energy, etc.). One must abandon the logic of "expanding empires" (EU, NATO, Russia) and adopt a logic of "joint management between empires", hard or soft, involving the United States, Russia and the EU (the EU on behalf of its Member States) in cooperation with regional powers: Turkey, Iran, Israel, the Alliance of Arab countries and all bordering states as well as China

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and Japan. After the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia, one should propose a new type of partnership with Russia. This should be a win-win scheme based on the experience of the Community of Coal and Steel yesterday, the Helsinki Accords, and the attempted European Community Energy today. For Europe, the key condition for peace and development in the twenty-first century are there (see the proposals for an Alliance of Three Seas, its "baskets", its "institutions" on the website of the Forum.

11. A SHAMEFUL DIRECTIVE. It is "*an escalation in the criminalization of migrants*" according to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right of migrants, the Mexican Jorge Bustamante. It must be reviewed. In addition, the European Parliament should initiate a process to bring European representatives within the UNFCCC to add a new protocol on forced climate migration to ensure freedom of movement for climate migrants. On this new legal basis, the European Parliament can then launch other steps to bring the European representatives in the WTO and other international decision-making bodies, to propose the development of a series of agreements expanding international freedom of movement to other categories of people.

THE TRIO "BELGIUM, HUNGARY AND SPAIN" IN 2010 - 2011

The three governments of Belgium, Hungary and Spain should propose to the European Council:

12. PRESIDENCY BY SPAIN IN 2010: In the current threatening context that severely threatens us, the launching of a **Third European Convention "Objectives 2020-2050"**. The aim is that all European stakeholders - public authorities at all levels, enterprises and financial institutions, trade unions, consumer organizations and Civil society in the broadest sense - negotiate a "*European Green New Deal*" (the post-Lisbon Strategy) for the implementation of the objectives set by the European institutions on climate change, the efficient management of energy and natural resources, competitiveness and job creation. The plan would cover our consumption patterns; include new indicators of "well-being" and the effective management of resources. Finally, if negotiators were to agree – a Charter of Common Goods & Collective Rights.

13. PRESIDENCY BY BELGIUM IN 2010: Regions in Europe. There are many countries in Europe where the national pact is in jeopardy. The role of the European Union under the regionalist/ethnic movement in Europe should be debated jointly by the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. The success of the peace process in Northern Ireland, continued attacks in the Basque Country and Corsica, the importance accorded to armed movements having practiced ethnic cleansing and sexual slavery (Kosovo), the threats to the Belgian model, etc. are reasons to question the role and influence of the European Union in the last two decades. A new framework is needed to complement the current instruments of governance in order to strengthen the recognition and visibility of the Committee of the Regions. Parliament and the Committee of the Regions should hold a joint meeting and hear reports from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, The League of Human Rights, the Council of Europe, etc. The joint programme of Belgium, Spain and Hungary in 2010 should provide for a session of the European Council and a delegation of the Committee of the Regions to draw conclusions from the meeting between Parliament and the Committee of Regions.

14. PRESIDENCY BY HUNGARY IN 2011: The theme of "**European Communities of human development**" should be on the agenda of a joint session in 2011 of the European Council and a delegation of the Committee of Regions. As part of the large European Union of 27 Member States and over, "*European Communities of human development*" based on indicators other than the GNP (such as the indicators of well-being of Eurostat and the UNDP indicator of Human Development) should be established. They will be pillars of participatory democracy in Europe. They will deal with policies that require taking account of geographical, climatic and cultural specificities. They will monitor the implementation, at community level, of the European strategy of sustainable development and certain aspects of agricultural and forestry, energy and water policies.

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ANNEXES TO THE PROPOSALS PRESENTED BY THE FORUM.

- 1) [The full text of the FORUM memorandum](#)
- 2) [The evaluation of the CITIZENS' AGORA experiment.](#)
- 3) [Synthesis of the recommendations adopted by Citizens' Agora on climate change.](#)
- 4) [Proposals formulated after the meeting EMPOWER at Bergamo \(Italy\) in November 2006](#)

15 October 2008.
